EDU 221

Spring 2013

Curriculum Instruction Assessment (CIA)

UbD Reflections –Chapter 5

In Chapter 5, of *Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding by Design*, the authors focus on assessment. They argue that the Understanding by Design (UbD) method provides educators with a clearer picture of what to assess. Moreover, the authors stress need to steer clear of high-stakes testing, instead, teachers should adopt an approach that relies on the use of multiple, and varied, means of assessment. A quote, used by the authors, sums this chapter up very well – “we need a “preponderance of evidence” to convict a student of learning” (Tomlinson & McTighe, p63).

I felt this chapter, and chapter 3 of Fair Isn’t Always Equal, both support the need for pre-assessments, ongoing formative assessments, and summative assessments. However, I felt the authors of this text provided more insights into ways to achieve this, for example, the “GRASPS” model. This framework for assessment recommends that teachers create assessments which include “(1) a real world **goal**, (2) a meaningful **role** for the student, (3) authentic (or simulated) real-world **audience(s)**, (4) a contextualized **situation** that involve real-world applications, (5) student-generated culminating **products** and performances, and (6) consensus-driven performance **standards** (criteria) for judging success.” Of these six components the one that stood out for me was number four. This echoes the Multiple Intelligences theory that states we can only gain a clearer picture of an individual’s abilities if the assessment involves realistic and contextualized situations. As a teacher in the making, I really like the idea of using this model in the classroom as it provides me with a clear guide for how to assess students in more realistic terms.